

**Maine Revised Statutes**  
**Title 22: HEALTH AND WELFARE**  
**Chapter 1054-B: PARENTS AS SCHOLARS**  
**(HEADING: PL 1997, c. 530, Pt. B, §1 (new))**

**§3790. PARENTS AS SCHOLARS PROGRAM**

**1. Established.** The department shall establish a student financial aid program based on need for up to 2000 participants known as the Parents as Scholars Program, referred to in this section as the "program," to aid needy students who have dependent children and who are matriculating in postsecondary undergraduate 2-year and 4-year degree-granting education programs. Enrollees in the program must be provided with a package of student aid that includes aid for living expenses equivalent to that provided pursuant to chapter 1053-B, medical assistance pursuant to chapter 855 and services equivalent to those provided pursuant to chapter 1054-A. A family that ceases to receive aid under this chapter as a result of increased child support or increased hours of, or increased income from, employment is eligible to receive transitional support services in accordance with section 3762, subsection 8. The program must be supported with funds other than federal block grant funds provided under the United States Social Security Act, Title IV-A, except that federal funds may be used in accordance with federal law if their use does not result in the imposition of conditions of participation or program requirements other than those established by this chapter.

[ 2003, c. 20, Pt. K, §14 (AMD) .]

**2. Eligibility criteria.** Families that qualify for TANF assistance under chapter 1053-B may apply to participate in the program instead of TANF. Individuals with marketable bachelor's degrees are ineligible for enrollment. Eligibility for and the amount of assistance must be determined in accordance with criteria and procedures used in the TANF program, this chapter and the rules adopted pursuant to this chapter and chapter 1053-B. Individuals applying to the program must be assessed in accordance with the provisions of section 3788. To the extent that program resources and space permit, enrollment in the program must be granted if the assessment results in findings as follows:

A. That the individual does not possess the necessary skills to obtain employment that will enable that individual to support a family at 85% of the median family income in the State for a family of the same size; [1997, c. 530, Pt. B, §1 (NEW).]

B. That, considering potential employment opportunities and local labor market conditions, the postsecondary education sought by the individual will significantly improve the ability of the family to be self-supporting; and [1997, c. 530, Pt. B, §1 (NEW).]

C. That the individual has the aptitude to successfully complete the proposed postsecondary program. [1997, c. 530, Pt. B, §1 (NEW).]

[ 1997, c. 530, Pt. B, §1 (NEW) .]

**3. Program requirements.** An enrollee must participate in a combination of education, training, study or work-site experience for an average of 20 hours per week in the first 24 months of the program. Aid under this chapter may continue beyond 24 months if the enrollee remains in an educational program and agrees to participate in either of the following options:

A. Fifteen hours per week of work-site experience in addition to other education, training or study; or [1999, c. 407, §1 (NEW).]

B. A total of 40 hours of education, training, study or work-site experience. [1999, c. 407, §1 (NEW) .]

The department shall present both options to enrollees and permit them to choose either option. For the purpose of this subsection, work-site experience includes, but is not limited to, paid employment, work study, practicums, internships, clinical placements, laboratory or field work directly related to the enrollee's employment goal or any other work activities that, as determined by the department, will enhance the enrollee's employability in the enrollee's field. In the last semester of the enrollee's educational program, work-site experience may also include resume preparation, employment research, interviews and other activities related to job placement.

The department shall make reasonable adjustments in the participation requirements in this subsection for good cause. For the purpose of this subsection, "good cause" means circumstances in which the required participation would cause the enrollee to seriously compromise academic performance. "Good cause" includes, but is not limited to, a verifiable need to take care of a family member with special needs, a physical or mental health problem, illness, accident, death or a serious personal or family problem that necessitates reduced participation or time off from education, training or work. An enrollee receiving aid under this chapter must make satisfactory progress in the enrollee's educational program. The department shall adopt rules defining satisfactory academic progress. The department may not disapprove an educational plan based solely on the length of the educational program.

[ 1999, c. 407, §1 (RPR) .]

**4. Child support for participating families.** A family participating in the program shall assign the right to child support to the department in the same manner as if the family were receiving TANF assistance. The department shall distribute to a family child support collected on behalf of a family in the same manner as if the family were receiving TANF assistance.

[ 1997, c. 530, Pt. B, §1 (NEW) .]

**5. Protection from loss of income.** To the extent permitted by federal law, aid received under this chapter must be disregarded as income and excluded as a resource or asset to the same extent as assistance under the TANF program under chapters 1053-B and 1054-A for the purposes of any state, federal, tribal or municipal assistance program. Aid received under this chapter must be treated in the same manner as assistance received under the TANF program under chapters 1053-B and 1054-A for all tax purposes.

[ 1997, c. 530, Pt. B, §1 (NEW) .]

**6. Maintenance of effort.** Aid provided under this chapter may not be paid for with federal funds provided under the United States Social Security Act, Title IV-A, provided that the state funds used for this program may be counted, without penalty, toward the State's federal maintenance of effort requirement.

[ 1997, c. 530, Pt. B, §1 (NEW) .]

**7. Rules.** The department shall adopt rules to implement this chapter that must be consistent with the rules adopted under chapter 1053-B. Rules adopted pursuant to this section are routine technical rules, as defined by Title 5, chapter 375, subchapter II-A.

[ 1997, c. 530, Pt. B, §1 (NEW) .]

#### SECTION HISTORY

1997, c. 530, §B1 (NEW). 1999, c. 407, §1 (AMD). 2003, c. 20, §K14 (AMD).

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